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ABSTRACT

The Community College Legislative Council was organized in 1971 to provide a means through which a uniform approach to the state legislature and legislation could be achieved by the various organizations representing components of the community college system. For each session of the legislature, the council prepares a United Legislative Program. Issues selected for inclusion in the united program must have the support of a majority of the constituent groups and the opposition of none. The united program provides the legislature with an indication of those issues on which there is general agreement throughout the community colleges. Position papers adopted by the Legislative Council for 1975 are presented on the following issues: (1) Operating budget, (2) cost-of-living adjustments--professional and classified, (3) exemption of cooperative preschools from unemployment compensation taxes, (4) property deeded to individual colleges, (5) authority to communicate with legislators, (6) health care for students, (7) fire protection, (8) receipt of gifts by the state board, (9) tuition-free high school completion, and (10) tuition. (Author/AH)

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1975 United Legislative Program

of the

Community College Legislative Council

STATE OF WASHINGTON

State Board for Community College Education

COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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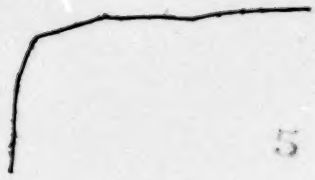

INTRODUCTION

The Community College Legislative Council was organized in 1971 to provide a means through which a uniform approach to the legislature and legislation could be achieved by the various organizations representing portions of the community college system. The Council consists of two representatives each of the State Board for Community College Education, the Washington Association of Community Colleges (representing administrators), the Trustees Association of Community Colleges, the Association for Higher Education (representing faculty), the Council of Representatives and Presidents (representing students), and one member from the Washington State Employees Association (representing classified employees).

The state director of community colleges serves as the non-voting chairman.

For each session of the legislature, the Community College Legislative Council prepares a United Legislative Program. Issues selected for inclusion in the united program must have the support of a majority of the constituent groups and the opposition of none. For example, an issue may be supported by administrators, trustees, faculty and State Board. The students may not actively support the issue but are not opposed to its inclusion. In such a case, the issue can be part of the united program.

Each of the constituent groups is free to pursue its own legislative program with the legislature. The united program simply provides the legislature with an indication of those issues on which there is general agreement throughout the community colleges.

The Council assigns the responsibility to the State Board staff to direct the presentation of the united program to the legislature.

Position papers adopted by the Legislative Council on each of the issues in the 1975 United Community College Legislative Program follow.

1975-77 COMMUNITY COLLEGE OPERATING BUDGET REQUEST SUMMARY

The objectives of the 1975-77 community college system operating budget request are to provide for continued enrollment growth, to restore operating resources lost to inflation, to provide funds which improve general support to a more normal level, and to provide for special programs to meet the needs of Washington citizens.

1973-75 Level	$202.6 M
+ To Maintain the 1973-75 Support Level through 1975-77	18.3 M

Including 1974 enrollment increase, salary increments, benefit plan increases, non-labor inflation

+ To Meet Anticipated Enrollment		11.1 M
	FTEs	%Increase
1974-75	73,395	
1975-76	75,162	2.4
1976-77	77,646	3.3

+ Services to Target Groups	6.9 M

Ethnic minorities, women, economically disadvantaged, senior citizens, handicapped, veterans and ex-offenders plus SBCCE minority specialists

+ Special Programs	14.6 M

- Management Information/Data Proc. $2.7 M
- Equipment Replacement (Reappropriation) $4.9 M
- Community Service Course Funding $1.6 M
- Staff & Program Development including required certification and re-training programs $5.4 M

+ Restore Support to Previous Level	22.0 M

Enabling districts to catch up with maintenance, library, student services and other expenditures deferred as support level fell more than 16% over the last five years

Total Request	$275.5 M

State Funds	228.6 M
Local Funds	24.9 M
Grants/Contracts	22.0 M
	275.5 M

POSITION

The Legislative Council supports the 1975-77 community college system operating budget request.

COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENTS -- PROFESSIONAL AND CLASSIFIED

Salaries for community college employees are critically in need of immediate adjustment. Major adjustments need to be made for both classified and professional personnel.

Classified

On January 1, 1974, community college classified employees received an average 4.5 percent salary increase as part of the process of conversion to the Higher Education Personnel Board single classification plan. The effect of this salary increase was to place classified salaries 4.5 percent below the prevailing wage as indicated by the 1972 salary survey updated to July 1, 1973.

On July 1, 1974, certain employees on HEPB Range 40 and below who qualified under other provisions of the 1974 special appropriation (Sec. 46, Ch. 142, 1974 Extraordinary Session, SHB 1310) received a 5.0 percent increase. However, less than 7.0 percent of the workforce actually received the increase and the amount expended from this appropriation was less than .14 percent of the total salaries for all classified employees. In effect, legislated salary increases for classified employees have not provided equity with the prevailing wage paid non-state employees. The exact magnitude of the proposed classified salary adjustment will not be known until the HEPB adopts a new pay plan in December.

It should also be noted that classified employees are typically in the lower paid categories and therefore feel the impact of inflation more severely.

POSITION

The Community College Legislative Council supports the principle of full parity funding for classified personnel based on the salary survey updated for 1974.

Professional

Since 1971 the legislature has controlled salary increases for faculty and exempt personnel in the community colleges. The "cost-of-living" adjustments have not kept pace with the cost of living. As a result, actual salaries have fallen considerably behind in terms of real purchasing power. The loss is also reflected when Washington salary rates are compared to other states with similar community college systems. A comparison has been made using the seven "pacesetter" states identified by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (Breaking the Access Barriers: A Profile of 2-year Colleges by Leland L. Medsker and Dale Tillery). The comparison reveals that Washington is 11.9 percent behind the other "pacesetter" states in faculty salaries.

It is estimated that an adjustment of 23 percent will be needed for 1975-76 to restore purchasing power to a level comparable to 1970-71.

POSITION

The Community College Legislative Council recommends that salaries for faculty and exempt personnel be increased by 23 percent for 1975-76, effective January 1, 1975. Subsequent cost-of-living adjustments will be recommended for 1976-77. Current estimates indicate a 1976-77 adjustment of 11 percent will be required.

EXEMPTION OF COOPERATIVE PRE-SCHOOLS FROM UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION TAXES

In 1973 the legislature passed House Bill 436 providing for the conformity of the state unemployment compensation program with federal law. (Chapter 73, Laws of 1973, Regular Session) The law makes it mandatory for cooperative pre-schools operated by the community colleges to pay unemployment compensation taxes.

Cooperative pre-schools are operated by the participating parents in conjunction with Parent Education programs in a number of Washington community colleges. The pre-schools provide a day-care facility for the children of the participating families and a laboratory that the parent education students utilize in furthering their training as parents. With the exception of one college, the pre-schools are operated as independent, nonprofit ventures by the parent cooperative on the theory that they provide an important opportunity for skill development in management, financing, and organizational activities. The parent cooperative employs a pre-school teacher who conducts the teaching program with the assistance of the "parent helpers." Parent helpers participate in the pre-school program as a field work experience in partial fulfillment of the requirements for their parent education course.

Under current federal regulations the cooperative pre-school organization is required to file a federal unemployment tax return and must pay the appropriate tax to cover the wages paid to the pre-school teacher it employs. Washington statutes do not provide a clear exemption of such organizations from paying the tax.

An exemption would eliminate the need to pay the unemployment tax. Although not a large amount, the tax does constitute what is felt to be a needless and burdensome expense to cooperatives which are composed mostly of low income family members.

POSITION

The Community College Legislative Council supports legislation which would exempt cooperative pre-schools operated by the community colleges from the payment of unemployment compensation taxes.

PROPERTY DEEDED TO INDIVIDUAL COLLEGES

Legal advice indicates that state law is not clear as to who holds title to property willed to a specific college. The colleges are state agencies; hence, the property is state property. However, is the title holder the college or the State Board? The law needs to be clarified. RCW 28B.50.140(8) -- Powers and Duties of Community College District Boards of Trustees -- states that trustees...

> "(8) May receive such gifts, grants, conveyances, devises and bequests of real or personal property from private sources as may be made from time to time, in trust or otherwise, whenever the terms and conditions thereof will aid in carrying out the community college programs as specified by law and the regulations of the state college board: sell, lease or exchange, invest or expend the same or the proceeds, rents, profits and income thereof according to the terms and conditions thereof; and adopt regulations to govern the receipt and expenditure of the proceeds, rents, profits and income thereof."

However, property sold by a specific college has been considered state property and can be sold only with the expressed authority of the State Board under RCW 28B.50.090 (12):

> "(12) Notwithstanding any other law or statute regarding the sale of state property, sell or exchange and convey any or all interest in any community college real and personal property when it determines that such property is surplus or that such a sale or exchange is in the best interests of the community college system."

The proceeds have gone to the State General Fund. The legislature has usually re-appropriated the proceeds to the college by specific action.

POSITION

The Community College Legislative Council recommends that title to property received from private sources by an individual college be held by the college with the understanding that the property is state property and that the district will hold and use the property consistent with the terms of the gift and shall have authority to convey and sell it.

AUTHORITY TO COMMUNICATE WITH LEGISLATORS

With the passage of Initiative 276 in 1972, the restrictions on state agencies relative to their dealings with the legislature have been increased. If an agency does not have the expressed authority to lobby as set forth in law, that agency may not lobby. Some higher education agencies can lobby and some cannot. Under present conditions, the State Board and the community colleges cannot.

POSITION

The Community College Legislative Council recommends that the State Board seek expressed authority for the State Board and the individual districts to provide information about the community colleges to the legislature.

HEALTH CARE FOR STUDENTS

The Community College Legislative Council recommends that the Washington State Legislature provide adequate funding in the 1975-77 biennial budget to provide health care for all community college students.

Health care is defined on Pages 25 through 29 of A Manual for Student Services for Community Colleges for the State of Washington, published by the Washington State Student Services Commission, and includes these services:

- Coordination of emergency medical treatment and referral

- Coordination of informational and referral programs in the following areas:

    a. Alcohol and Drug Abuse
    b. Child Health Care
    c. Dental Care
    d. Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety
    e. Expectant Parent Education
    f. Family Planning
    g. Health Guidance and Counseling
    h. Immunization
    i. Mental Health
    j. Nutrition
    k. Venereal Disease
    l. Industrial First Aid

- Coordination of campus-wide health education programs in concert with student developmental programs

POSITION

The Community College Legislative Council recommends that the Washington State Legislature provide adequate funding in the 1975-77 biennial budget to provide health care for all community college students in the State of Washington.

FIRE PROTECTION

State law provides that institutions located in fire protection districts must contract with the fire district for fire protection. Senate Bill 1268, enacted in 1974, amended the law to provide that school districts will receive fire protection services without the need for the execution of a contract. The act provides that the State Insurance Commissioner must establish uniform rates for payment by school districts to fire protection districts for fire protection, and requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to include in his biennial budget request funds sufficient to reimburse affected school districts for this expense.

The community college system seeks the same exemption from the necessity to contract for fire protection from fire districts in which they are located.

POSITION

The Community College Legislative Council recommends that Section 1, Chapter 139, Laws of 1941, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 64, Laws of 1973, 1st Extraordinary Session, and RCW 52.36.020 be amended to provide that community college districts which reside within fire protection districts will receive fire protection without the need to execute contracts for such services.

Rates for reimbursement for fire protection service will be set by the Insurance Commissioner, based on criteria developed by the State Board for Community College Education, the Insurance Commissioner, and the Office of Program Planning and Fiscal Management.

RECEIPT OF GIFTS BY THE STATE BOARD

State law authorizes community college districts to receive such gifts, grants, conveyances, devises and bequests of personal property from private sources that will aid in carrying out the community college program. State law does not give the State Board for Community College Education the same authority.

The State Board needs to be able to receive any gifts or grants that may be offered to it to carry out community college programs in either a restricted or unrestricted manner as specified by the donor.

POSITION

The Community College Legislative Council recommends the State Board for Community College Education be given the same authority to receive gifts, grants, conveyances, devises and bequests of personal property that has been given to the community college districts. To accomplish this, legislation should be added at RCW 28B.50.090 which would read as follows:

> "(13) May receive such gifts, grants, conveyances, devises, and bequests of real or personal property from private sources as may be made from time to time, in trust or otherwise, whenever the terms and conditions thereof will aid in carrying out the community college programs and may sell, lease or exchange, invest or expend the same or the proceeds, returns, profits and income thereof according to the terms and conditions thereof."

TUITION-FREE HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION

The community college system has long advocated the maintenance of student charges at a level as low as possible to remove financial barriers to higher education. This policy is especially pertinent with regard to students attending community colleges to get their high school diplomas or GED certificates. Such individuals are, almost by definition, disadvantaged because they lack high school credentials and are less likely to be able to afford tuition and fee charges. Waiver of student charges for students in high school completion or GED certificate programs is the "open door" concept in action.

However, community colleges are in a precarious financial position. While completely endorsing the tuition and fee waiver for high school completion, the colleges would not be able to absorb the revenue lost from tuition waiver if it were not replaced from another source. Estimates are that such a fee waiver program would entail a revenue loss during the 1975-77 biennium in excess of $1,400,000.

POSITION

The Community College Legislative Council recommends waiver of tuition and fees to community college students in high school completion programs provided there is a specific appropriation restoring the lost revenue.

TUITION

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The community college provides the principal means for open access to higher education and thus fosters equal opportunity for all persons. Equal opportunity requires removal of financial barriers as well as geographical, social and academic barriers.

Equal educational opportunity is essential to full development of human resources, to economic growth, national security and the reduction of poverty. These benefits must be considered the return on the investment of public funds in community college education.

To assure universal access to higher education, the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education and the National Commission on the Financing of Postsecondary Education have both recommended low or no tuition for community colleges.

The Carnegie Commission wrote, "If the goal of universal access to the system of higher education is to be achieved, it seems imperative that tuition charges at community colleges be held to a minimum."

The Commission also expressed the opinion that community college students may be reluctant to finance their education through borrowing since many are uncertain about their ability to succeed in college.

The National Commission has estimated that for each $100 annual increase in tuition, access is denied to three percent of the enrollment.

For the most part, these represent low-income and unemployed persons. Community colleges provide higher education to a higher proportion of students from low-income families than do other parts of the higher education system, according to U. S. census data.

In recommending tuition levels, higher education economists, including those of the Carnegie Commission and the National Commission for Financing Postsecondary Education, include in their computations the estimate of "foregone earnings" -- income that would be earned by the student if he were employed full-time rather than attending college. On the average, they recommend students pay from 2/3 to 3/4 of the cost of their higher education, including foregone earnings, tuition, books and materials, and incidental expenses. Using similar computations, it can be shown that Washington community college students already pay approximately 78 percent of the cost of their education -- above the recommendations of both Commissions and other economists.

A computation is shown below:

Student's payment for:		
Incidental expenses (Books, supplies, transportation, etc.)	$ 263.00	
Tuition	249.00	
Unrecovered loss of foregone earnings	3,100.00	
TOTAL	$3,612.00	77.56%
Society's payment for:		
1972-73 Instructional costs* (excluding tuition)	$1,045.00	22.44%
TOTAL	$4,657.00	100%

*SOURCE - Council on Higher Education

TUITION (CONT'D.)

In preparing the plan that led to the creation of Washington's community college system, the A. D. Little Company advised against earmarking tuition to support operating and capital expenditures since the practice could result in increasing pressure to raise tuition, thus reducing the availability of higher education to those unable to pay. Little found high tuition antithetical to the concept of the open door community college.

Yet as Washington's revenue crisis continues, the pressure does increase to raise tuition. This comes at a time of growing unemployment when additional persons seek community college training to improve their job skills at a time when their ability to pay is most limited.

To increase community college tuition would further diminish the ability of the community college to assure access to higher education for all Washington citizens therefore:

POSITION

The Community College Legislative Council recommends that community college tuition be maintained at its present level.

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